

The White House - an announcement today that President Nixon will soon disclose - the next phase of his Vietnam withdrawal program. Press Secretary Ron Ziegler saying the President will set forth his plans - in his words: "very likely between now and July One."

July One, - as we know was the target date - for completion of the present phase of the withdrawal program. The President pledged to cut total U.S. troop strength by then - down to forty-nine thousand men. Ziegler stressing today that the pledge still stands. The ^UU.S. Command in Saigon is currently "meeting that level" - said he - "and will meet that level."

ABRAMS FOLLOW WHITE HOUSE

The White House also announced^S~~today~~ -
that the commander of all U S forces in Vietnam
will soon be coming home. General Creighton Abrams
to become the new Army Chief of Staff; Succeeding,
as he did in Vietnam - General Westmoreland - who
retires in two weeks.

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QUANG TRI

Meanwhile, the fighting continues. With a force of about two thousand South Vietnamese marines - attempting to retake a section of occupied Quang Tri Province; only to be met by fierce enemy resistance along an eighteen mile front.

DEMOCRATS

In the wake of ~~that~~^{the} weekend break-in at Democratic National Headquarters - a Million-Dollar damage suit ^{was} filed today by Democratic National Chairman Lawrence O'Brien - "in behalf of all Democratic voters." O'Brien naming as co-defendants - not only the five men arrested but also the ^{so-called} Committee to Re-Elect the President. "As far as I am personally concerned" - said he - "there is certainly in every sense a clear line here to the Committee to Re-elect the President; and therein developing" - he continued - "a clear line to the President."

REACTION FOLLOW DEMOCRATS

As for White House reaction - it's still "hands off."

Ron Ziegler referring virtually all questions - either to the Re-Election Committee or Republican National Chairman Robert Dole.

Ziegler also saying: "The President has read with interest about this matter - and is confident ~~that~~ the full process of law will run its course." But further stressing: "This is something the President would not get involved in - at all."

NEW YORK

*Here in New York today - the last-in-the-nation
Presidential primary. While waiting for results - George
McGovern lashing back at his chief critic of late, Accusing
Hubert Humphrey - of "undermining his reputation and
jeopardizing his party." This - said McGovern - "by the
kind of misleading statements he has been making - about
my positions." McGovern also saying: "I am afraid ~~that~~
my old friend has forgotten - there is such a thing as wanting
too much to be elected."*

MUSKIE FOLLOW NEW YORK

Reverse side - from Edmund Muskie; who said today that Humphrey's criticism of McGovern - was good for the party and "good for" McGovern, too. "He's become a front-runner - he's being tested now" - said Muskie. Adding: "He's going to have to reassure - a great many people." These - said Muskie - including many Democratic leaders across the nation - who "are deeply concerned they can't sell his positions."

SENATE

On Capitol Hill - the Senate Armed Services Committee held a hearing today - on that new U S ~~and~~ [^] Russian Salt agreement. Chief witness - Defense Secretary Melvin Laird; who said ~~that~~ Russia has started testing highly sophisticated new missiles - apparently just since President Nixon returned from Moscow.

Laird also saying - as he has before - that he will oppose the Salt pact - unless the U S similarly proceeds with new weapons systems. These two issues are tied together - said he. Adding that anything less - would jeopardize the national security. Laird declaring: Peace cannot be bought cheaply.

MOSCOW

In the Soviet Union - another escalation today in that country's war against alcoholism.

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The Kremlin setting up a new schedule of prison sentences for convicted bottleggers; first offense, up to three years in jail - second offense, up to five years.

The new rules - also grounding drunken drivers. While those convicted of habitual drunkenness ~~will~~ ^{will} lose their right to visit government ~~to~~ sponsored health spas, and ~~drop~~ ^{drop} to the end of the line - On waiting lists for new apartments. That last - may be the toughest blow of all. An apartment of one's own in Russia - ~~perhaps the most~~ ^{can be a} prized possession.

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Indeed Kremlinologist Leopold Tyrmand recently noting: "Under communism, a man succumbs to mental disorders because of an apartment -

commits suicide because of an apartment; ~~he~~ will
b marry for ^{—Warum—}an apartment, - and ^{even} ruin his life for an
apartment."

COLUMBUS

Columbus, Ohio - an agreement today between the state of ~~Ohio~~ Ohio and the giant Hanna Coal Company; thereby assuring safe passage - for the so-called "gem of Egypt,"

~~This~~ a twelve-story-high strip-mine shovel = weighing hundreds of tons. The Hanna Company - planning to move it to a new mining site near Henrysville, Ohio. To get there though - they have to cross ^{busy} ~~at~~ interstate highway seventy. Hence today's agreement. Hanna pledging to build a land bridge across the highway, a huge mound of earth - so as not to crush the pavement. Also, selling to the State - the land on which the highway was [—] built [^] wholly owned Hanna property.

Hanna officials explaining they thus expect to save the firm - more than a million bucks; the cost of dismantling the Gem of Egypt - and reassembling it on the ~~new~~ other side.